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dencing an easy and graceful style, coupled with great fluency of language, did not in any way aid in obtaining for the author the reputation he afterwards possessed. Nor was the publication of the *American Monthly Magazine*, a periodical founded by him, a success either in a pecuniary or literary sense. This monthly existed for two and a half years, when, in 1831, it was merged into the *New York Weekly Mirror*, a literary journal published by the late George P. Morris, who was then one of the rising literary men of the times.

"From his earliest youth Mr. Willis had cherished a desire of visiting Europe, and this feeling was gratified shortly after his connection with the *Mirror*. Starting upon his tour, he visited Paris, where he was appointed one of the attachés to Mr. Rives, the United States Minister, and was thus enabled to gain access to the highest circles of the European capitals. While abroad he contributed to the *Mirror* a series of papers, entitled 'Pencilings by the Way,' which laid the foundation of his fame, and brought him prominently before the public. His descriptions of persons and places were lively, sparkling and brilliant, but revealed more of the superficial observer than of the earnest thinker. And this sentence can be applied to all of Mr. Willis' productions.

"In 1835, Mr. Willis married Mary Leighton Stace, a daughter of William Stace, Commissary General and Commander of the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, England. During the same year he made a collection of his 'Pencilings by the Way,' and published them in London. From their alleged freedom of criticism and personal remarks respecting prominent English characters they were fiercely assailed by the British periodicals, and particularly by the *Quarterly Review*. About this time he became involved in a personal difficulty, which resulted in a duel. Having made some critical remarks on Marryatt's novels, that author replied in a most offensive manner, and Mr. Willis promptly called him to account. The result was a hostile meeting at Chatham, but which resulted in no bodily injury to either. While in London he also published 'Inklings of Adventure,' by Philip Sidney; the work also containing a series of tales contributed to the *New Monthly Magazine*. This book, as also 'Pencilings by the Way,' obtained a large circulation in England, and met with the same popularity when republished in this country.

"Two years after his marriage Mr. Willis returned to this country and retired to a small estate on the Susquehanna, which he had purchased and which he named 'Glenmary.' In this charming rural abode he wrote his 'Letters from Under a Bridge,' which for their chaste and beautiful descriptions of American country life, soon became popular. For two years he pursued a life of rural quietude, during which his country home was further endeared to him by the entrance into it of a daughter, whom he named Imogen. At the expiration of this time he found himself necessitated to abandon his solitude, and to plunge anew into the turmoils of the world. His wife's father had died; his publishers had failed, and his financial affairs embarrassed him considerably. Mr. Willis therefore removed to New York, where, in connection with Dr. Porter, he established the *Corsair*, a literary journal. Revisiting Europe sometime after his embarkation in this new enterprise, he engaged quite a number of distinguished foreign authors as contributors to his journal, the late Mr. Thackeray

being one of the number. While in London on this second tour he published two volumes of his works entitled 'Letters from Under the Bridge,' and 'Loiterings by the Way,' the last being a collection of tales and European letters. These were followed by a small volume entitled 'Two Ways of Dying for a Husband,' and which contained his two dramas, 'Tortosa the Usurer,' and 'Bianca Visconti.' About this period he was engaged to write the letterpress for W. H. Bartlett's work on the scenery of the United States and Canada, a task that he accomplished with his usual elegance of style.

"In 1841 Mr. Willis returned to America, and discovering that Dr. Porter had become discouraged with the prospects of the *Corsair*, he abandoned that Journal, and in connection with his old partner, General Morris, started a daily paper called the *Evening Mirror*. This enterprise which, at the outset, promised brilliant success, was soon after abandoned by reason of his failing health, caused by too close an application to his duties, and by a domestic affliction which spread a pall of gloom over his life. The death of his wife, to whom he had been devotedly attached, and who was in every respect worthy of his affection, affected Mr. Willis so seriously that his friends prevailed upon him to visit Europe, and in other climes, surrounded by diverting scenes, soothe his sorrows and recuperate his health. In accordance with this advice he started for England and in 1845 published three volumes, containing a collection of his magazine articles, under the general title of 'Dashes at Life with a free Pencil.' The publication of these volumes was attended with much success and added to his reputation both in Europe and in this country.

"In 1846 Mr. Willis returned to New York, where he published a large octavo volume containing a complete list of his works. Towards the close of the same year he was married for the second time to Cornelia, only daughter of the Hon. Joseph Grinnell, of Massachusetts. Once more he entered into a literary partnership with General Morris, and established the *Home Journal*, a weekly paper, which both proprietors conducted until the time of their deaths."

#### ART MATTERS.

There is growing up among our landscapists a class of artists who may be called "Poet Painters"—men who, deriving their inspirations direct from Nature, and going direct to that great fountain head of beauty and grace, present to us pictures which are not mere portraits of the scene represented but possess a sentiment and feeling which should always be the characteristics of true landscape painting. It is sheer nonsense to say that sentiment can only be obtained in a figure picture, that the lights and shadows of human life are the only vehicles by which an emotional feeling can be conveyed; no such thing: to the artist looking on Nature with a truly poetic and artistic eye there are phases in a landscape which convey to his mind all those delicacies of thought and expression which are to be found in the human face and figure, and the reproduction of these phases on canvas, to my mind, fully entitle him to the name of Poet.

Mind you, it is no common mind that can see and appreciate these beauties; a man must be educated up to the proper standard, must, to a certain extent, be imbued with the "divine affla-

tus," and must, above all, entirely throw overboard conventionalities and preraphaelitism, a school of art which ere now has proved the utter ruin and damnation of what might otherwise have been great painters. What we want in a landscape is the grand feeling and sentiment of Nature, in the largest sense of the word, not a servile copying of the minor objects and incidents, but such a judicious blending of the whole as shall impress us with some sentiment and emotion, and not with the industry or perseverance of the artist who can carefully copy the number of leaves on a tree and present them to us with a Chinese accuracy of detail.

In direct contradistinction to this school is what may be called the "Mechanical;" the disciples of which seem to be utterly incapable of seeing Nature with a poetic eye, and can present her only in the most purely practical form. Art, when used in this form, degenerates into mechanism, and no longer inspires us with any feeling or emotion whatever, and while we may admire the painter as a clever mechanic we can never accord to him, with justice, the title of artist.

One of the most prominent members of this school of "Poet Painters" is Mr. H. D. Martin, whose works for the last few years have attracted considerable attention. Mr. Martin is eminently a poet—you can see and feel an undercurrent of poesy and love of Nature running through all his pictures, which at once attracts your eye, and, if you be an appreciative lover of art, causes you to linger over the work of his hands, charmed by its delicacy, grace and sentiment.

Mr. Martin has just finished a perfectly delicious landscape which he calls "Boreas Lake, Adirondacs." Taken from the wildest portion of our great Northern wilderness, the picture presents to us Nature in her primeval state of tranquil solitude and grandeur—the cloud-capped mountains, the towering pines and cedars, the distant shore, bathed in the hazy light of Midsummer, the pellucid waters of the lake and the impressive feeling of loneliness which pervades all are admirably rendered, and should Mr. Martin never paint another picture this one alone would win for him an honorable and lasting reputation.

We find here not only grandeur of effect, but, in places, an almost preraphaelite finish—not preraphaelite in the common acceptance of the word, hard, crude, ungraceful—but preraphaelitism used in that higher, purer way by which we are made to see the delicacy and detail of Nature represented with grace and beauty both of form and color. The mass of trees in the foreground shore are a good illustration of this; they are painted with wonderful finish and attention to detail, but are so admirably massed that, to a casual observer, this labor is not apparent, and you overlook it while taking in the general effect of grandness and space which characterizes the whole picture. Preraphaelitism, used in this way, is no longer objectionable, but becomes an assistant and a valuable vehicle to the artist in properly conveying his ideas and sentiments, and could the mass of painters who abuse and prostitute the theory be brought around to this way of thinking, there would be fewer pictures in our studios and on the Academy walls that call but for ridicule and utter and entire condemnation.

Mr. F. G. Melby is another of our landscape painters who, to perhaps a lesser extent than Mr. Martin, possesses the characteristics of the "Poet School" of Art. The gentleman has on his easel a picture of "Thunder Cape, Lake Superior," which has many really fine points. The time chosen is sunset, and over the tops of the mountainous shores, which girt the lake at this point, are heaped a mass of fiery, stormy sunset clouds, while the foreground water is ruffled and agitated, breaking against the sides of the staunch little steamer in the middle distance with angry and defiant spleen. Mr. Melby has treated his sky with great breadth and feeling, the luminous atmospheric effect of sunset being well rendered; the cliffs are also excellent in color, character and effect, while the steamer is full of motion and action. The foreground water, however, is not so good; in it, to make a stupid and obtuse joke, Mr. Melby seems to have been "all at sea," and, although the effect of light is cleverly treated, the waves are altogether too stiff and hard to meet with unbounded praise. For all this the picture is a great one, and possesses to a great extent a feeling of poetry and sentiment which marks Mr. Melby as a promising disciple of the New School.

Mr. J. B. Irving has on his easel an exquisite little *genre* picture which he calls "The First Born." We all know, or at least have heard of, with what tenderness and love the young mother regards her first born, how she humors its every whim and pours out upon it the stream of maternal affection with which her young heart is welling over, how she dandles it on her knee, kissing and caressing the little innocent in her rapturous ecstasy, while on her face beams a smile of ineffable tenderness and joy. This is the sentiment Mr. Irving has endeavored to depict on canvas, and he has succeeded admirably. The mother, the child, are both excellent and would almost tempt one into matrimony, were it but to see that smile of happiness reproduced in nature.

The French painters are preëminent for their treatment of drapery, but it would appear that in Mr. Irving we have growing up in our midst an artist who in time will fairly rival them on their own ground. The drapery in this picture is painted with a delicacy and finish which is simply superb, resembling more the work of Wilhelm, the greatest of modern drapery painters, than that of an American artist. The accessories, too, are excellently painted, while the whole picture is full of pure, luminous color.

The National Academy gave a reception on Thursday evening of last week, which I have heard was well attended, the display of pictures being quite creditable, but as the Secretary neglected to send cards to this office, it is, of course, impossible to notice the exhibition in these columns.

Mr. H. W. Derby reopened the old Somerville Gallery, 845 Broadway, last week with the collection of pictures belonging to Mr. Wright of Weehawken. Among the pictures exhibited are Rosa Bonheur's celebrated "Horse Fair," Gaillet's "Last Honors paid to Counts Egmont and How," Eastman Johnson's "Old Virginia Home," Cropsey's large picture of "Indian Summer" and many other valuable works. I hope to give an extended notice of the collection at some future day.

PALETTEA.

#### MATTERS THEATRIC.

Probably one of the most difficult tasks that could be set a man, would be to write a dramatic article for the present week, containing anything new or original. Tantalus-like, the critic stands and looks forward with eyes of longing to the coming week, when we are to have the "Merchant of Venice" at the Winter Garden, produced in a style which is to surpass any of the former efforts in the way of scenic display that have yet been attempted at this establishment.

At Wallack's "Ours" still maintains its reputation as a "crack" organization, while half the young ladies in town are going into ecstasies over Mr. Wallack's excellent acting and beautifully curled whiskers.

At the New York Theatre poor "Cinderella" still weeps over her woes in very stupid language and equally bad music, Mark Smith is as funny as ever, and *la belle* Hinckley is correspondingly beautiful. At this establishment there is some promise of novelty, a new Parisian play, which is the synonym for *légér* costuming, entitled "The Bird of Paradise" being announced as in preparation.

At the Broadway Theatre the Worrell Sisters are drawing good houses, performing a round of amusing burlesques, singing songs, dancing hornpipes, playing banjo solos and enjoying themselves generally. At this establishment also we are promised a novelty in the shape of a mysterious melodrama, the main incidents of which are said to be wonderfully startling.

Putting a girdle round about the earth in considerably less than forty minutes, and jumping in one line from America to England, I am happy to record the unbounded success of Mrs. John Wood on the London boards as Leander in the "Invisible Prince," her performance in that part having received the approbation not only of the critics but of the public at large.

The only event of real interest that has occurred during the week was the presentation to Mr. Booth of a testimonial medal on Tuesday evening. The extract, from the *Daily Times*, given below will explain the whole affair. It is seldom that extracts from other papers are made in this column, sweet reader, but in the present instance your humble and devoted servant is laboring under so severe an attack of "Lack of Novelty," that he must claim your indulgence, and hope that you will be content to remain satisfied with his promise to be a "better boy" next week.

WINTER GARDEN.—Nothing is so encouraging to art as the encouragement of artists. After the curtain had descended on the last act of "Hamlet," the audience was treated to a series of Danish airs, and then arising again, displayed the scene set, in the centre of which stood a small table, upon which was a gold medal, the gift of sundry gentlemen represented in a Committee, who were upon the stage.

Mr. Fullerton, the Chairman of the Committee, advancing toward Mr. Booth, handed him the medal, and said:

MR. BOOTH: You have deservedly won a position in your profession which few men have ever attained. The representation of one of Shakespeare's plays for one hundred consecutive nights, to overflowing and delighted audiences, is a triumph unrecorded in the annals of the stage until you accomplished it, and is well worthy of com-

memoration. But it is not alone your success as an actor which has attracted public attention, and called forth this demonstration. You have won alike the applause and respect of your fellow-men, and a numerous body of your friends and admirers, through their Committee now here present, desire to present you with some evidence of their appreciation of your genius as an actor, and their respect for you as a man, more substantial and enduring than the fleeting, though hearty plaudits nightly heard within these walls. To that end they have instructed me to present you with this medal. Intrinsically it is of little worth, but as a token of the regard of your fellow-citizens, it possesses a significance far more valuable than the gold of which it is composed, or the artistic skill which has beautified it. It was thought proper, Sir, that this presentation should take place on the occasion of the play of "Hamlet," with which your name will ever be associated, and on the very spot of your greatest professional achievement, thereby affording your numerous friends an opportunity of witnessing it. But the time and place chosen for this ceremony have another and a deeper significance. They are intended as a recognition of your life-long efforts to raise the moral standard of the drama, and to encourage you in your future efforts to accomplish that result. In conclusion, Sir, I beg you to accept this gift, and at the same time allow me to express the universal wish that you may live to win new triumphs in a profession which your virtues have elevated and your talents adorned. [Applause.]

Then, taking the medal from the box, he advanced a few steps, and placed it around Mr. Booth's neck, amid the immense applause of the audience. When this had in a measure subsided, Mr. Booth replied as follows:

GENTLEMEN: It is impossible for me to respond in fitting terms to the very graceful, eloquent and very complimentary words just spoken. And yet while accepting the beautiful token of your appreciation of my professional merits, I am proud to accept your estimation of me as a man. It behooves me to say that I am thankful. "Beggars that I am, I am poor in thanks." Accustomed as I am to conceal my own feelings beneath the player's mask, I find it difficult to give expression to my feelings. Therefore, I beg you will receive these three simple words—I thank you—the very utmost of my ability in speech-making, as the sincere, though humble, expression of a grateful heart.

Then turning to the audience he said:

"To you, ladies and gentlemen, to whom I owe so much, who have so generously, so nobly sustained me, I beg leave, likewise, to tender my most grateful acknowledgments. The debt I owe you can never be paid, but I trust to future endurance as an actor, and in my conduct as a man and fellow-citizen, ever to deserve your confidence and support."

The Committee then retired to an ante-room to partake of a supper gotten up for the occasion.

The medal is oval in form, surrounded by a serpent. There are emblematic flowers at the base, the skull of Yorick, two foils crossed, and the raven. In the centre, Booth's head as Hamlet; at the top the Danish Crown, from which hang two wreaths on either side of laurel and myrtle. The pin from which the medal hangs has in the centre a head of Shakespeare, on each side Comedy and Tragedy. The motto is: "*Palman qui meruit ferat.*" The superscription on the back is:

"TO EDWIN BOOTH, in commemoration of the unprecedented run of 'Hamlet,' as enacted by him in New-York City for one hundred nights."

At the close of Mr. Booth's remarks the curtain fell amid a perfect burst of applause that called and recalled him to acknowledge the courtesies of the house.

SHUGGE.